

Our Mission

“to serve God and share the good news of Jesus Christ”

Christmas Eve ~ Nativity of Our Lord

December 24, 2025 ~ 7:00pm

Introduction

In winter's deepest night, we welcome the light of the Christ child. Isaiah declares that the light of the long-promised king will illumine the world and bring endless peace and justice. Paul reminds us that the grace of God through Jesus Christ brings salvation to all people. The angels declare that Jesus' birth is good and joyful news for everyone, including lowly shepherds. Filled with the light that shines in our lives, we go forth to share the light of Christ with the whole world.

Prelude

“The Bells Of Christmas” (by Mokelbust)

Jubilate, Gene Fougner, Director

Welcome

P: This is the day that the Lord has made.

C: Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

GATHERING

Confession and Forgiveness

P: God of stable, stars and surprises,
Of light and hope and new life:

C: Open our eyes and hearts to your presence in our world:

P: Forgive our obsession with property and possessions;
Forgive our compromises and narrowness of vision.

C: Open us to your grace:

P: That we might hear again the song of the angels,
And respond with a song in our hearts, and in our lives.

C: Amen

Gathering Carol

ELW 283

“O Come, All Ye Faithful” (vs. 1, 2, & 3)

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant! O	The highest, most holy, light of eternal,
come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem.	born of a virgin, a mortal he comes;
come and behold him, born the king of angels:	Son of the Father now in flesh appearing!
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,	O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!	O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

Swing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God in the highest:
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

Greeting

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the Communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: And also with you.

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

L: We light the white center candle. The Christ Candle represents Jesus, the Light of the World, who has come to save us from ourselves and bring light to all.

L: Let us pray:

C: Gracious God, as we light this final candle, we celebrate the birth of your Son, Jesus, who came to be with us. We adore you, Jesus, and welcome you into our hearts and homes. May your light fill us, and may we reflect your hope, peace, love, and joy to a world in need. Thank you for the gift of Christ, our Savior and King. Amen.

Prayer of the Day

P: Dear God,

C: Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that here on earth we may walk in the light of Jesus' presence and in the last day wake to the brightness of his glory; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

WORD

First Lesson

- ² The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—
on them light has shined.
³ You have multiplied the nation,
you have increased its joy;
they rejoice before you
as with joy at the harvest,
as people exult when dividing plunder.
⁴ For the yoke of their burden,
and the bar across their shoulders,
the rod of their oppressor,
you have broken as on the day of Midian.
⁵ For all the boots of the tramping warriors
and all the garments rolled in blood

Isaiah 9:2-7

- shall be burned as fuel for the fire.
⁶ For a child has been born for us,
a son given to us;
authority rests upon his shoulders;
and he is named
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
⁷ His authority shall grow continually,
and there shall be endless peace
for the throne of David and his kingdom.
He will establish and uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time onward and forevermore.
The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

Special Music

Ben Lowe, baritone, Kathleen Cuvelier, piano
"In the Bleak Midwinter"

Second Lesson

Luke 1:26-32; 2:1-7

²⁶ In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷ to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." ²⁹ But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰ The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹ And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David.

² In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ² This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³ All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴ Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. ⁵ He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶ While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷ And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

Christmas Carol

ELW 279

“O Little Town of Bethlehem” (vs. 1 & 2)

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!
Above the deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by;
yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light.
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary, and, gathered all above
while mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wondering love.
O morning stars, together proclaim the holy birth,
and praises sing to God the king, and peace to all the earth!

Third Lesson

Luke 2:8-14

⁸ In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹ to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” ¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

¹⁴ “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”

Christmas Carol

ELW 289

“Angels We Have Heard on High” (all verses)

Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing over the plains,
And the mountains in reply, echoing their joyous strains.
Gloria in excelsis Deo; gloria in excelsis Deo.

Shepherd, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be which inspire your heavenly song!
Gloria in excelsis Deo; gloria in excelsis Deo.

Come to Bethlehem and see him whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee Christ the Lord, the newborn king.
Gloria in excelsis Deo; gloria in excelsis Deo.

Fourth Lesson

Luke 2:15-20

¹⁵ When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” ¹⁶ So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷ When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸ and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹ But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰ The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

Special Music

Jubilate, Gene Fougner, director

“Ukrainian Bell Carol” (by Scholes)

Fifth Lesson

Matthew 2:1-12

² In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, ² asking, “Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.” ³ When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; ⁴ and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵ They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

⁶ ‘And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for from you shall come a ruler
who is to shepherd my people Israel.’”

⁷ Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. ⁸ Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.” ⁹ When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰ When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. ¹¹ On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. ¹² And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

Christmas Carol

“The First Noel” (all verses)

ELW 267

The first Noel the angle did say was to
certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay; in fields where
they lay, keeping their sheep, on a cold winter's
night that was so deep. Noel, Noel, Noel,
Noel! Born is the King of Israel.

They looked up and saw a star shining
in the east beyond them far; and to the
earth it gave great light, and so it continued
both day and night. Noel, Noel, Noel,
Noel! Born is the king of Israel.

And by the light of that same star three
wise men came from country far; to seek for a
king was their intent, and to follow the
star wherever it went. Noel, Noel, Noel,
Noel! Born is the king of Israel.

This star drew near to the northwest, o'er
Bethlehem it took its rest; and there it
Did both stop and stay right over the
Place where Jesus lay. Noel, Noel, Noel,
Noel! Born is the king of Israel.

Then entered in those wise men three, full
reverently upon their knee, and offered
there in his presence their gold, and
myrrh, and frankincense. Noel, Noel, Noel,
Noel! Born is the king of Israel.

Message

Pastor Tricia Lowe

“Angel Gift Tag”

Passing of the Peace

P: The Peace of Christ be with you always,

C: And also with you.

What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mary’s lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet while shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the king, whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
Haste, haste bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary!

Offertory Prayer

P: Let us pray: God of glory, great are your wonders among us and many are the blessings you bestow. Use us and these your gifts for the needs of the world, that all the ends of the earth may rejoice in your saving grace, through Christ our Savior.

C: Amen.

MEAL**The Great Thanksgiving** (spoken)

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them to the Lord.

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

P: It is right, our duty and our joy...we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

C: Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!

P: Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life . . . Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

C: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

P: With this bread and cup we remember your Word dwelling among us, full of grace and truth. We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection. We look with hope for his coming.

C: Come, Lord Jesus.

P: Holy God, we long for your Spirit. Come among us. Bless this meal. May your Word take flesh in us. Awaken your people. Fill us with your light. Bring the gift of peace on earth.

C: Come, Holy Spirit.

P: All praise and glory are yours, Holy One of Israel, Word of God incarnate, Power of the Most High, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

The Lord’s Prayer

C: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

Invitation to Communion

P: God is now in flesh appearing. Come to the feast of joy for Jesus invites you!

“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing” (all verses)

Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn king;
peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled.”

Joyful, all you nations, rise; join the triumph of the skies;
with angelic hosts proclaim, “Christ is born in Bethlehem!”
Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn king!”

Christ, by highest heaven adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord,
late in time behold him come, offspring of a virgin’s womb.

Veiled in flesh the Godhead see! Hail incarnate deity!

Pleased as man with us to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel!

Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn king!”

Hail the heaven born Prince of peace! Hail the Sun of righteousness!

Light and life to all he brings, risen with healing in his wings.

Mild he lays his glory by born that we no more may die,

Born to raise each child of earth, born to give us second birth.

Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn king!”

Communion Blessing

Communion Prayer

P: Incarnate God, you are among us at this table. May we treasure this gift and ponder in our hearts the mystery of your presence. Move us to discover the wonders of your love in the everyday moments of our lives, through Christ born in us.

C: Amen.

Special Music

Ben Lowe, baritone, Kathleen Cuvelier, piano

“O Holy Night”

SENDING

Lighting of the Candles

Closing Carol

“Silent Night, Holy Night!”

ELW 281

Silent night, holy night! All is calm,
all is bright round yon virgin mother and child.
Holy Infant, so tender and mild, sleep in heavenly
peace, sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night! Shepherds quake
at the sight; glories stream from heaven a far,
heavenly hosts sing, alleluia! Christ, the Savior is
Born! Christ the Savior, is born!

Silent night, holy night! Son of God,
love’s pure light radiant beams from your holy face,
with the dawn of redeeming grace, Jesus, Lord, at your
birth, Jesus, Lord, at your birth.

Blessing

P: The triune God, glorious Mystery, holy Incarnate One, abiding Comforter, ✠ bless you with endless grace, peace, and joy.

C: Amen.

Dismissal

P: Christ is born! Go tell it on the mountain and everywhere.

C: Thanks be to God.

Postlude

Kathleen Cuvelier, piano

“There’s A Song In The Air” (by Karl P. Harrington)

***Please** be cautious as your candle is lighted (keep in an upright position to avoid wax dripping). At the back of the Worship Center is a basket to place your candle.
Thanks so much for assisting us.

WELCOME, EVERYONE!

Merry Christmas from Emmanuel Lutheran Church!

Thanks to each of you for joining us this Christmas Eve.
We wish you a Blessed Christmas and a most Joyous New Year.
A Special Thanks to all who shared their gifts of music
with us this evening.

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Sunday, December 28 one worship service at 10:00 am.

Church Office is closed between Christmas and New Years.

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POINSETTIAS



IN MEMORY OF . . .

Janice Doering, from Julie Doering

Naomi Baldwin & Bill Deffenbaugh, from Donna Deffenbaugh & Kimberly Goats

Mia Dickson, from Tim & Leisa Hansen

Roger & Marion Hesse & Earl & Audrey Hartz, from Myron & Cheryl Hartz

Our parents, from Tom & Zona Huss

Our sister Cathy Strike & sister-in-law Judy Intlekofer

Margaret & Dick Lowe and Arnold & Olga Reimer, from Tim & Pastor Tricia Lowe

Keith Namock (husband & father) and Julie Ward (daughter and sister of Brad, Jamie & Teresa Namock, from Cathy Namock

IN HONOR OF . . .

Emmanuel Lutheran Council, and Emmanuel Lutheran Altar Guild, from Tim & Pastor Tricia Lowe

All my family and friends, for all their support in college and in life, from Sam Tischafer

Jesus Christ, from Julie Doering